

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP
SUBJECT: NIMEIRI VISIT TO US: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER

REF: (A) KHARTOUM 4027, (B) STATE 214435

1. NIMEIRI'S CONFIDANTE AND CLOSE ADVISOR FATH ABD AL-RAHMAN BESHIR AND I HAD OPPORTUNITY DISCUSS SUDANESE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO U.S. DURING MEETING IN BESHIR'S OFFICE WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30. HE HAD SPENT PREVIOUS EVENING WITH NIMEIRI AND SEEMS AS FULLY INFORMED AS ANYONE REGARDING VISIT.

2. BESHIR, WHO HEADS SUDANESE SIDE OF U.S.-SUDAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (USSBC), DESCRIBED HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH JOHN BREWER OF U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. APPEARS THAT COUNCIL WILL ARRANGE SOME SORT OF RECEPTION FOR NIMEIRI, BUT EXACT DETAILS HAVE NOT YET BEEN DEVELOPED PENDING DEFINITION OF NIMEIRI'S OFFICIAL PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON. IN THAT CONNECTION, BESHIR PHONED MINPRESIDENCY BAHBA EL-DIN IDRIS WHILE WE WERE TOGETHER, AND DR. BAHBA SAID THAT HE STILL WAITING FOR WORD FROM SUDAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON RE NIMEIRI'S PROGRAM THERE (CF. REF A).

3. AT THIS POINT BESHIR ASKED ME WHAT ARRANGEMENTS HAD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KHARTO 04078 311202Z

BEEN MADE FOR NIMEIRI TO SEE PRESIDENT CARTER. HE MADE THREE BASIC POINTS. FIRST, MEETING WITH PRESIDENT OBVIOUSLY WAS SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF VISIT AND KEY TO ITS SUCCESS FROM NIMEIRI'S POINT OF VIEW. SECOND, NIMEIRI WANTS TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT FIRST BEFORE OTHER MEETINGS; HE APPARENTLY CONSIDERS THIS ONLY PROPER MANNER TO BEGIN VISIT IN TERMS PROTOCOL AS WELL AS FOR OTHER

REASONS. FINALLY, BESHIR STRESSED THAT AS OAU PRESIDENT, AS AN ARAB LEADER OF GROWING STATURE, AND IN LIGHT CURRENT STATE U.S.-SUDAN BILATERAL RELATIONS, IT ONLY APPROPRIATE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER RECEIVE NIMEIRI.

4. I EXPLAINED THAT I OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT MAKE PRESIDENT CARTER'S APPOINTMENTS AND THAT MY UNDERSTANDING WAS THAT FRANCIS DENG AND SUDANESE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WERE WELL ALONG IN MAKING PREPARATIONS. I REMINDED BESHIR THAT EARLY SEPTEMBER SCHEDULING HAD SURPRISED US SINCE WE ORIGINALLY EXPECTED VISIT LATER IN MONTH OR IN OCTOBER. MOREOVER, CAMP DAVID SUMMIT WAS COMPLICATING FACTOR. DRAWING ON REF B, I ASSURED BESHIR THAT USG WELCOMED VISIT AND WE HOPED HAVE DETAILS RE PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON ASAP. I ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT FOCUS WOULD BE ON SUBSTANTIVE TALKS AND NOT RPT NOT ON CEREMONY AND ALSO NOTED THAT NIMEIRI'S MEETING WITH PRIVATE SECTOR AND IN CONGRESS WOULD ALSO BE IMPORTANT. BESHIR SAID SUDANESE AGREED.

5. COMMENT: BESHIR, WHO WILL BE IN WASHINGTON DURING NIMEIRI VISIT IN HIS CAPACITY AS HEAD SUDANESE SIDE USSBC, IS QUITE CLOSE TO NIMEIRI AND I BELIEVE HIS REMARKS REVEAL THAT NIMEIRI HIMSELF PROBABLY SOMEWHAT ANXIOUS OVER WHETHER HE WILL BE SEEING PRESIDENT CARTER. AFTER TALKING WITH DR. BABA, I NOW RPT NOW BELIEVE SUDAN-GOV OFFICIALS HERE KNOW LITTLE MORE ABOUT PROGRAM THAN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KHARTO 04078 311202Z

WE IN EMBASSY. AS INDICATED REF A, SUDAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON HAS BEEN GIVEN AUTHORITY PUT PROGRAM TOGETHER, AND EVERYONE HERE WAITING FOR SOME WORD. MEANWHILE, WE HAVE BEGUN TO GET QUERIES FROM VARIOUS INTERESTED SUDANESE ABOUT PROGRAM. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT KEEPING US AS CLOSELY ADVISED AS POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY, OF COURSE, ON ANY INFO RE NIMEIRI-CARTER MEETING. BOGOSIAN

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